



Our diverse Animas River Watershed Community
is united to keep the river healthy, productive,
and fun for all uses.

6/8/15

Animas Watershed Partnership Newsletter

"Nature always wears the colors of the spirit." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Spring Forum: Who Pooped in the River?

On Thursday June 4th Melissa May, Resource Specialist for the San Juan Soil and Water Conservation District (and AWP Steering Committee member) presented the results of a Microbial Source Tracking Study in the Animas River and the San Juan River.

The study from April 2013 through October 2014 sought to answer the question of "Who Pooped in the River?" by identifying the animal sources of E.coli, nitrogen and phosphorus, at 4 sites on the Animas (and 2 on the San Juan).

Bacteria live in warm bodies, evolve with the host, and are not generally harmful. Human Bacteroides had the most positive tests at 80% of samples, and bird was second at 50%. In 2014 ruminant testing was added, with 100% of samples testing positive. Horse was not detected in any sample.

The data shows that high nutrient levels were often associated with high E.coli levels. And high levels of both were associated with precipitation events. Loads of these constituents often exceeded the New Mexico TMDLs at the state line sampling sites.

Next step? Focus on education and implementing BMPs. As Melissa says, "The sources are the solutions."

Upcoming Events

- June 29th SJWG meeting at Farmington Civic Center: Agriculture BMPs
- AWP Steering Committee meeting: August 6th, Farmington
- Summer Forum: September 3rd in Farmington

Project Updates

Currently AWP is sampling E.coli, Phosphorus, and Nitrogen at 2 sites on the Florida River, 2 on Salt Creek, and 1 on the Animas River. At the same time, AWP is partnering with landowners on the Florida River to install riparian fencing and to improve irrigation efficiency. AWP hopes to continue to work with interested landowners to implement BMPs to improve river health.

Volunteer Opportunities

Upcoming volunteer opportunities include AWP's water quality sampling effort. Dates are: June 8th, 22nd, July 6th, 20th, August 3rd, 17th, 31st, September 14th, 28th, October 10th, 11th, November 9th, 23rd, and December 7th. If this is something you are interested in helping with, please email Rachel Hoffman at healthyanimas.awp@gmail.com.

AWP BACKGROUND AND CONTACT

AWP Mission

"To protect and improve the quality of water resources to benefit the Animas River, now and in the future."

AWP is a collaborative community based group. We work with many groups and individuals from Silverton to Farmington.

One of our purposes is to collect and share information about the watershed. It is important for everyone to understand where their water comes from and what is in it. After all, it is over 60% of what we are made of!

Help AWP make all this possible. You can volunteer, participate in our quarterly forums, and stay informed.

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